# UNITY

*FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION*

## FREE INDIA NOW

The dictates of national self-preservation, military strategy, and political integrity require that Great Britain free India now. For complete victory over the Axis the United Nations need the full cooperation of India. This cooperation can be had by the stroke of a pen. This act of plain justice and common sense might save the allied cause irretrievable disaster in the Orient. The larger strategy of democracy is involved. Let there be no further delay. The time to free India is now.

Curtis W. Reese

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# UNITY

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## The Field

*"The world is my country, to do good is my Religion."*

**Western Unitarian Conference**

The ninetieth session of the Western Unitarian Conference will be held with the First Unitarian Church of St. Louis, Missouri, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, May 10, 11, and 12, 1942. The anniversary sermon will be preached on the evening of May 10, by the Reverend Jacob Trapp, pastor of the First Unitarian Society of Denver, Colorado. The general theme of the Conference will be "The Religious Roots of Democracy." The St. Louis church is offering hospitality in the homes of its members to the delegates from the churches of the Conference. The completed program will be printed and ready for distribution at an early date.

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On Sunday, February 1, the Reverend Kenneth L. Patton was installed as minister of the First Unitarian Society of Madison, Wisconsin. Dr. A. Eustace Haydon of the University of Chicago preached at 11 o'clock, and the installation address was delivered at the evening meeting by Dr. Curtis W. Reese, president of the Western Unitarian Conference.

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The Reverend Arthur W. Olsen has resigned the pastorate of the Unitarian church in Melrose, Massachusetts, to accept a call to the First Unitarian Church, Toledo, Ohio.

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A Midwest Fellowship has recently been organized to promote within the Unitarian and other liberal churches a factual and tolerant understanding of those who for conscientious reasons cannot participate in war. Dr. Homer A. Jack is chairman of the group. The name of the organization is the Midwest Fellowship of Unitarian Pacifists, and its official purposes are:

1. To assist, in whatever ways possible, prospective and classified conscientious objectors;
2. To promote, in the Unitarian and liberal churches, a factual and tolerant understanding of those who cannot participate in or support war; and
3. To work for the use of constructive and non-violent methods of social change as the only right and effectual means consistent with a religion devoted to the love of truth and the service of man.

# UNITY

*"He Hath Made of One All Nations of Men"*

Volume CXXVIII MARCH, 1942 No. 1

## Editorial Comments

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

I.

Unforgettable is the statement of General MacArthur, made some weeks ago in a dispatch to Washington, reporting certain details of his heroic defense of the Bataan peninsula against the onslaughts of the Japanese. Describing the destruction or capture of an attacking force of Japanese shock troops, he noted in his dispatch that his prisoners were being *"treated with the respect and consideration which their gallantry so well merits."* I want to commend this statement, made by a man in the thick of the most desperate fight in the history of modern warfare, to the hardy stay-at-homes who are shouting their heads off about the dirty yellow-bellies, the fiendish yellow devils, who should be murdered to the last man for the greater glory of America. Safe in their clubs or newspaper offices, these fanatics who are thousands of miles away from any point of danger, will be satisfied with nothing but the indiscriminate massacre of the whole Japanese population. But General MacArthur, who may be killed at any moment, speaks of the "gallantry" of his foes, whom, when at his mercy, he treats with "respect and consideration." The New York *Times,* commenting upon this statement by an American officer who is also a gentleman, speaks of it as "in the grand old military style"—before war became a horror of mass murder and machine destruction! Then it goes on to point out what is the supreme significance of the whole affair—that "it is not inconsistent with a considerable disrespect for the Japanese responsible for this war."

> It is a soldier's way of discriminating between the black-hearted sneaks and liars who ordered the war and the men in the ranks who have to fight it. In this discrimination lies some hope for the future after our victory has been won.

There's the truth of it—that we must discriminate absolutely between the Japanese government and the Japanese people! And, by the same token, between the Nazi government and the German people, and the Fascist government and the Italian people! "We have no quarrel with the German people," said Woodrow Wilson in the last war. And the same applies all around to this war! The people are innocent of this war. They are not sinning, but have been sinned against. And it takes a soldier, face to face with his mortal enemy, to teach us all this truth!

II.

Insistent, unceasing, is the call in Europe for an end of war. Two thrilling testimonies, widely published in England, have reached this country. One is the statement of the Cardinal Archbishop of Ireland, whose heart is moved alike by the agony and futility of the present struggle. Says this distinguished churchman and true Christian:

> After two years of war, and although passions have been inflamed, and anger, hatred, and revenge aroused, I say that there is incomparably a better chance of attaining a just peace now than if the war is fought till it ends in victory . . . or in stalemate.

Referring to the sufferings of "the poor plain people of the world, to whom victory on either side will not mean very much," he continues:

> I think the statesmen of the world should now come together and see whether it is not possible to arrive at a just peace. . . . In view of the sufferings of the world there is a grave obligation upon the statesmen to make more of an effort than they seem to be doing to bring about a just and lasting peace.

Another statement to this same effect, echoing the Cardinal whom it quotes, was made in the House of Commons by Dr. Alfred Salter, a member of nineteen years standing, holding the high respect of all parties. This speech, as published and widely distributed in England by the *Peace News* (London), and republished in this country by the National Council for the Prevention of War (Washington), is an out-and-out plea for peace *now.* Stating as a Quaker his opposition to "all war for any purpose whatever," and asserting that "there are at least 2,000,000 people who share these views" in England, Dr. Salter cries out for the cessation of hostilities:

> The people of Europe are undergoing hell at this moment. . . . Is there to be no end to this torture of millions of human beings? Is there no pity in the whole world? Are all our hearts hardened and coarsened by events?

Proclaiming again his testimony against all war, Dr. Salter refuses to take notice of "church leaders, who declare in one voice that all war is opposed to the spirit and teaching of Jesus Christ, and in another talk war,

preach war, and pray for victory in war." War is wrong, and for that reason must ruin us all, victor and vanquished together, if it is allowed to continue longer.

> We cannot believe that any new or righteous order of society will be achieved by evil means. . . . Britain and all Europe are rushing down the steep slope to collective suicide and damnation. Must the war continue . . . until the final crash ends in prolonged anarchy and social confusion? Will not somebody, for the love of God, for the sake of Christ, demand sanity and peace?

Are these lonely voices? No, in this country as in England, millions echo them. Let them be heard, till they are answered!

III.

*Worldover Press* gives us a clear picture of the opposition groups that exist in England today and are allowed to function without interference. These groups do not include either the Liberal or the Labor Parties, nor yet the Communists, all of which have been swept into full support of the war policy of the Churchill government. They are small minority groups which make up in conviction what they lack in size. The most important of these groups, at least politically, is the Independent Labor Party, which has three representatives in the Commons, headed by James Maxton. In divisions, this party is able to cast only a single "no" vote, as two of the three members have to act as tellers and under the rules cannot themselves vote. This party is in favor of a socialized England, political warfare in Europe to undermine the Nazis, and a negotiated peace. It publishes a weekly newspaper, the *New Leader*. A second opposition group is that of the Socialists in Scotland. This group has no representatives in Parliament, but carries on a vigorous campaign of criticism in its weekly organ, the *Forward*. The third group, and a very influential one, is composed of pacifists, anti-war folk, as organized particularly in the Peace Pledge Union. Members of the Union are conscientious objectors to war, and thus critical of the whole war policy of the government on fundamentally moral and religious grounds. Though numbering well over a hundred thousand, these Unioners have no official representatives in Parliament, though several MPs are out-and-out pacifists, some of them Quakers, who make their opposition to the war clearly manifest on the floor of the House. They publish a widely read weekly, *Peace News*. To Americans concerned with problems of censorship, and of political opposition generally, these minority groups should be of the greatest interest. The important thing is that, during nearly two years of critical warfare, in dire emergencies of arms, they have carried on without the slightest suggestion of interference. Not only the government, but public opinion as well, has been utterly tolerant. Their journals, pleading for freedom for India, or calling for a negotiated peace now, or harshly criticizing the cabinet and its policies, are all printed on paper rationed to them by order of the government itself. We have no such opposition in this country—no such bold speaking of frank dissent. If and when it comes, it is to be hoped that the United States, like England, will prove its faith in freedom by its works.

IV.

In the last issue of UNITY I reported Gandhi's steadfast stand on behalf of his pacifist idealism. The war draws steadily nearer to India's frontiers, but the Mahatma still believes in and defends his doctrine of non-violence. But now that his fellow-countrymen are proposing to fight, he is not going to interfere with their action, and so has resigned his position of leadership in the All-India National Congress. In his paper, *Harijan*, which has now resumed publication, Gandhi writes:

> My resistance to war does not carry me to the point of thwarting those who wish to take part in it. . . . I reason with them. I put before them a better way and leave to them to make the choice.

In this is an important statement of one of the fundamental aspects of democracy—that the majority has rights! Ordinarily, in discussing democracy, we think only of the rights of minorities. And this is proper, since it is the rights of minorities which are most easily lost, and thus stand in need of the most urgent protection. But in any true democracy, the majority has rights as well. Certainly the right to carry out its will, when duly ascertained by the democratic process, without wanton interference from without! In India, apparently, the Congress, or the Working Committee of the Congress, has taken action in expression of the free will of the people as represented by the Congress, and this action is unfavorable to Gandhi's principle of non-violence. So Gandhi straightway resigns, and thus gets himself out of the way of the Congress which has a right to carry out its policies. The right of the majority to its own freedom! The same thing applies here in America. This country, by the constitutional functioning of its representative government, has gone to war. It has done this in obedience to the will of the people as expressed in the way provided by the machinery of democracy. Without a single exception, so far as I know, the pacifist and anti-war groups have bowed to the will of the majority, and declared that they would not in any slightest way interfere with the prosecution of the war. Conscience forbids them to participate in this war; but to just the degree that the pacifist asks respect for and recognition of his conscience, he will in turn give respect to and recognition of the non-pacifist's conscience. In both cases there must be freedom of action as well as thought.

V.

Pearl Buck declares that race prejudice in America is the greatest single obstacle in the way of our winning this war. In saying this, she is referring not merely to the dreadful fact of race discrimination in the armed forces of the nation, which is turning the Negro population of this country into one seething mass of unrest

and revolt. What Mrs. Buck has particularly in mind is the effect of our contemptuous prejudice against colored races upon the fateful situation in the Far East. Japan stands ready, she insists, to exploit to the limit every reported lynching, every slurring reference to "yellow-bellies" and "yellow devils," every act of segregation and exclusion affecting Asiatic aliens, every indication of our perverted sense of superiority over all races but our own, i. e., the whites. What is involved in this situation is shown by the fact that there are 450,000,000 Chinese who are just as yellow in color as the Japanese, and thus themselves directly insulted by every reference to racial traits. In India are 380,000,000 dark-skinned men and women who were long ago humiliated by our Asiatic Exclusion Act, and who resent to their very souls the white man's arrogance at home and abroad. Then all through the Indies and Thailand are native populations, long degraded and oppressed, who show not the slightest indication of favoring the United States and Britain as over against their fellow-Asiatics from Japan. Only in the Philippines, apparently, have we Americans broken through the racial barrier, and by our unselfish administration of the islands, our superb educational and cultural activities, and our loyally-fulfilled pledge of independence, won the Filipinos to our side. No greater tribute to enlightened colonial government has ever been seen than the way the inhabitants of Luzon are sustaining and coöperating with the heroic forces of General MacArthur. But the fact of race prejudice still remains. Here at home, especially in our treatment of the Negroes, as Mrs. Buck points out, we are disrupting the nation's unity, breaking down its morale, and fatally endangering its cause in this great struggle. Abroad, we are alienating from all sympathy and coöperation the hosts of Asiatics whose destiny is identical with our own, and yet who are denied the recognition of equality which they feel to be not a favor but a right. How are we better than the Nazis if we flaunt this black flag of race superiority? And how can we hope to overcome them if we cleanse not ourselves of their offense?

VI.

In the February issue of *Harper's Magazine*, Bernard DeVoto has some speculations about private schools. Referring to an imaginery but typical country day school, "Five years from now," he suggests, ". . . there won't be a Winship [school].' And he continues, "How many schools like it will be left in all the United States ten years from now?" The war will have finished them. "The once comfortably placed middle-class," with living costs increased 50 per cent and taxes quadrupled, simply won't have the money to send their children to these institutions. This speculation about private schools brings to mind a recent discussion by Mr. Roger W. Babson of the similar fate impending upon the churches. These also are private institutions in the sense of being supported by private contributions. How many of them are going to keep going under conditions more rigorous than they have ever faced in all this country's history? "Churches are needed even more this year than last year," writes Mr. Babson in the *Christian Science Monitor*. "From a spiritual point of view, they should gather great strength. People are beginning to feel that religion, or some form of spiritual worship, is the only common denominator left to them." But there remains the financial problem presented by taxes and more widespread demands upon income. Mr. Babson believes that "churches which serve in defense areas," or have predominantly skilled workers in their membership, are going to do better financially this year. The workers are earning higher wages than ever before. "These wages will continue and perhaps even increase while the war lasts." The recipients will undoubtedly give generously to the churches. But what about the middle-class churches, which draw their members from the white collar groups? Mr. Babson is here discouraging.

> [These groups] have little to look forward to in the way of wage or salary increases. Many not engaged in armament industries may lose their jobs. They are also particularly affected by the new income taxes. Hence the churches . . . will find it more difficult to raise funds this year than in previous years.

Churches catering to the wealthy classes will be similarly affected. As I think of income taxes in the upper brackets, I should think that church offerings from the rich would be seriously depleted. All of which means that we are undergoing, or about to undergo, the most drastic social changes we have ever known! The whole basis of support especially of the Protestant churches is being disrupted as though by an earthquake. That churches, like private schools, will close is not to be believed. But that they must think through their financial problem all anew is obvious.

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# Jottings

Dr. John Sutherland Bonnell, in his recent book, *Britons Under Fire,* states that whereas, in the last war, 30 to 40 percent of the men in the Army and Navy were enrolled in the church, today the number has dwindled to 10 percent. This confirms Joseph Fort Newton's recent testimony that the church in England has quite lost its grip on the people. Perhaps the spectacle of the church presenting arms is not so inviting, after all!

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A New York journalist suggests that the shuttle service in North Africa be stabilized—that since Britain

can't reach Tripoli nor Germany Egypt, the two mark out a line midway between the two and declare a truce. This would seem to be sensible. But war is not sensible. So we suppose the fighting will go on, now east, now west.

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William Henry Chamberlin, in his new book, speaks of this period of history as "the world's iron age." Max Lerner, in his recent book, characterizes this age as an "ice age." Whichever of these two men is right, it is evident that we are moving pretty far back into the past these days.

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Honolulu and Pearl Harbor are now prohibition territory. No more liquor! But if good in this case, why not in all cases? Why not banish booze from all military centers, all naval bases, all camps—and from Washington, which is the worst "wet" city in the country?

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It was a wierd experience, on February 9th last, to put the hands of the clock ahead one hour to the new "war time," which is to last for the duration. How many people, I wondered, thought as I thought—Shall I ever live to put this clock back to standard time?

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It seems to be as easy for the amateur strategists in the newspaper and radio offices to win this war as it is hard for the professional strategists at the front to do so. This suggests the way to set things right—namely, bring the soldiers home, and put the newspaper experts and radio commentators in their places. And yet. . . .!

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

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# A Mandate for Religious Liberals

ERNEST CALDECOTT

An effective social program must stem from a general philosophy whose roots lie in the fertile soil of universal existence. Much as we admire the enthusiasm of those possessed of a passionate devotion to the welfare of humanity, it must be evident that we need something more than "zeal without knowledge." Pious hopes and indefatigable labors will not suffice to produce a healthy society. The many plans of enthusiasts, whether workable or not, have failed to win support.

If our central thesis is sound, even the erudite systems of economists and political scientists who are daring enough to propose important changes in national and international life, must prove abortive. It is not enough to know the social sciences; man must integrate that knowledge into a meaningful whole.

It is probably not too much to say that we need to think in new dimensions. At first blush, it may seem to be a far cry from efforts to alleviate human suffering to urge that we do some fundamental thinking as to the nature of the universe and of man before we plan for a new world order. In the long run, a person's and a people's philosophy determines his or their conduct. On the whole, the prevailing philosophy of the recent past and of the present has been, and is, incongruous with the known facts of existence. This is true both in Church and in State. The evidence of the truth of this statement is revealed in the utterances of religious and political leaders. Occasionally, a voice cries out in the wilderness indicating that someone has sensed the need for new modes of thinking. For the most part such thoughts are confined to academic cloisters.

If the faith of a religious liberal in the basic soundness and educability of normal human beings is valid, it follows that while a finer biological stock would be of great avail, what has to be done to produce a more just society is not to change human nature eugenically, but for leaders to think more soundly and to devise improved techniques for implementing their thought. The ordinary individual may not be capable of mastering an involved system of mathematics, physics, and chemistry so as to produce an automobile or an airplane, but he can learn to drive with safety. In like manner, the average person can adapt himself to improved social conditions even though he is incapable of devising such processes.

On the one hand, the work of misguided and uninformed social reformers serves but to provoke suspicion and disdain in the minds of those who accept the present order as the best possible in a world of imperfect human beings. On the other hand, the devices of the competent not stemming from a philosophy of the whole constitute mere patchwork on the body politic, and also lend support to the fear that such theorists are destructive radicals in disguise.

Therefore, as religious liberals, we must first of all plead for thinking in terms of the facts of existence. That being the case, we proclaim an impersonal evolutionary order of the universe, which as far as we know, moves on without human influence. This impersonal order constitutes the raw material with which to work, and there is no other. We must hasten to add, however, that, under science, it contains vastly more possibilities of yielding the good life than any fanciful theories of ancient theologians who peopled the universe with angels that could dance on the point of a needle.

We may further recognize man as a purposive, meaningful creature capable of using universal forces for high personal and social ends. Man then becomes the measure of all things. We also observe that mental evolution is only in its relatively initial stages. An Aristotle and a Pericles are but harbingers of an evolutionary process of the mind which has scarcely begun.

Finally, we are in the early period of social evolution. In the course of many centuries, mankind has inherited from his animal ancestry a sympathetic nervous system, so that with his now developing intelligence he feels concern for other human beings. This concern needs to be expressed in terms of known, and to be known, psychological and sociological data.

Such, in a few words, is the basic philosophy which should motivate all effort at human well-being. It is frankly instrumentalistic, for no absolutism seems possible. Thus, we conclude that a working philosophy

of the whole is needed, and that the systems now in vogue are inadequate. So much for the principles. What of their practice in the face of existing conditions?

Modern society requires some form of collectivism. Most of us do not like the word. It savors of regimentation and is especially distasteful to religious liberals who proclaim the gospel of the infinite worth of every human being, the sacredness of personality, and the maximum freedom of individuals. Moreover, collectivism is but a step to totalitarianism whose utter destruction of human values appears imminent.

But, let us not be frightened by a word. The application of scientific knowledge has brought China nearer to us than Philadelphia was to Chicago a century ago. The middle western farmer is more affected by what now takes place in London and Berlin than he once was by events on a neighboring ranch. The question is not whether we can best live separately or together, but *how* can we best live together.

Even if our ethics do not compel us to be concerned for one another, economic necessity will drive us to it. Assuming, then, that our basic principles of living require practical implementation, the problem before us is one of the maximum voluntary association with the minimum of compulsion. If we do not choose the former the latter will be forced upon us, not as a minimum, but in all its devastating completion.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to present a detailed scheme for a better world order. Suffice it to say that if religionists inspire the plan, experts are available to devise it, not as an inflexible machine but as an organism in flux.

In view of present European conditions, affecting the entire planet, and remembering the utter disaster that must come from a war to the finish, we should advocate a negotiated peace, in which three factors should hold the center of the stage. First, disarmament, to include a world police force and abolition of private traffic in arms; second, an international government for international purposes; and third, the internationalization of natural resources on a pro rata basis. Details of the restoration of nations could be worked out much more speedily by the prior adoption of such a plan than by first considering their self-determination. It is assumed that all groups functioning as nations prior to the war would have representation at such a conference.

A tentative peace having been established, with people back at work in as normal a manner as conditions permit, the most important moves should be (a) toward free trade under agreed-upon labor conditions; (b) a world economy to facilitate exchange; and (c) a vast movement of cultural life, educational and religious, as the best means of creating universal understanding and good will. Religious liberals would be completely at home in this latter program, for their philosophy is so inclusive as to contain what is best in all religions and culture.

It remains for us to point out certain practical possibilities looking to the release of human energy and the development of justice in our own country.

1. We should advocate the taxation of land values. The earth and its resources are not the proper property of any human being or of any group; nor can law establish such ownership in any ethical sense. We penalize men who improve their land, or who build houses, by taxing them for their industry, and permit others to call unearned increment their own.

2. A simplified, graduated income tax should be inaugurated, with the abolition of all other taxes, as far as possible, that can be passed on to others, including sales taxes, a large proportion of which bear heavily upon those of small earnings. Every man and woman ought to know to a dime exactly what he and she is paying for government. At present so many taxes are hidden or paid out in very small amounts as to confuse taxpayers and preclude their active interest in what the government is doing. Also, this business requires a veritable army of collectors and bookkeepers who ought to be working in constructive and independent enterprises.

3. Since at least a modified form of capitalism is likely to continue in this country for another generation or so, with its inevitable fluctuations involving unemployment, a Public Works program of needed projects should be planned to take up the slack, at rates slightly lower than those prevailing in industry in so-called normal times, but with high social standards to set the pace for private business. National and regional post-armament employment, vocational and avocational, should be planned and inaugurated.

4. We should advocate the establishment of Industrial Courts of Arbitration, with power to enforce rulings. Such courts would best consist of persons qualified to adjudicate, and, therefore, be composed of men and women possessing knowledge of industrial and business procedure. This should carry with it the abolition of strikes, which constitute an absurd and unsatisfactory technique for attracting attention, to say nothing of the harmful walking delegates whose livelihood depends so largely upon fomenting trouble.

5. We should also advocate the establishment of a high standard requirement (not alone scholastic) for entrance into all governmental or public offices. Matriculation in advanced courses of economics, government, commerce, psychology, and sociology should be encouraged by awarding posts to trained persons more interested in careers and society than political aspirations.

6. Finally, we should insist upon the functioning of the constitutional right of civil liberties. Infraction of such rights in this country is a tragic story. Most of us ignore it, because we are not of the ilk who care greatly for the underdog, be he white or colored. That there exists an undue fanaticism in defending unwise persons who commit perfectly legal but ridiculous offenses reflects no credit upon us. Fools, like the poor, we have with us always. But restriction of proper human liberties almost invariably begins by hitting at those with little sense, and then proceeding to the violation of the rights of those who are rationally concerned for personal freedom.

As the late Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, a lifelong Unitarian, once remarked, "freedom of speech means freedom for the thought we hate as well as for that which we like." It might be added, too, that volatile utterances are usually a safety valve.

It is maintained that not a solitary social problem exists that cannot be dealt with satisfactorily. Our ineptness comes not from the nature of the case but from the indifference of the capable to social well-being. Government is a necessary nuisance, but as long as it is necessary it is incumbent upon the competent to assume full responsibility for its conduct. There exists, too, many voluntary socio-cultural groupings requiring the attention of the capable. It is be-

lieved that the present complicated social structure could be greatly simplified, even though we recognize that a modern society is necessarily highly involved.

As we look about us we see evidence on every hand of well-meaning men and women painstakingly at work, and without thought of personal sacrifice, performing functions inefficiently and even unwittingly adding to the problems of social living. At the same time there is an abundance of intelligence available to discharge all reasonable obligations.

The present world crisis is a challenge to religious liberals to prove the validity of their gospel. Leadership is imperative; the masses are due to follow. With becoming modesty we should esteem it our high privilege to assume the maximum of personal and group responsibility.

A greater opportunity for making a contribution to the world in general and to the United States in particular awaits us today than has existed at any time in our history. Conditions confronting the day of Channing were small compared with those of our time. Yet, it was only by virtue of his leadership, with the support of hundreds of competent co-workers, clergy and laity, that something approaching order was produced from a chaotic theological and social situation. By taking responsibility for the introduction of a more rational mode of thinking in religion and its practical application in the social life, the early Unitarians contributed effectively to human development.

The challenge today calls for the best we have within us. Again, "these are the times that try men's souls." With a profound philosophy of living, a program, and a high sense of responsibility, we have now before us a Mandate for Religious Liberals.

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# Music and Understanding Among Peoples

PALMER VAN GUNDY

Never have the forces which would tear humanity apart seemed more menacing, or the need greater for those healing influences which tend to bind peoples together. The fact that music is one of those influences has long been recognized. But even its warmest admirers may not have realized how great its effect actually is in promoting good will among differing racial and national groups.

"I'll never be able to hate the German *people,*" a discerning friend remarked, "as long as I can still recall one chord of the music of Bach. Nor will I—though I hate Nazism as I hate evil itself—clamor for vengeance on a whole nation. For I remember that it was this same nation that gave me Beethoven and Mozart and Wagner and Brahms."

Opinions of this kind are surprisingly common, certainly more so than in the last war. May the explanation not lie at least partially in the phenomenal increase of interest in classical music in the last twenty years—a development which has brought with it a growing appreciation of the contribution of German composers to the culture of the world? And if for this reason many persons retain a high regard for the German people, despite the barbarisms of their leaders, may not something of the same thing be true in the cases of the peoples of Italy and France, and of other nations allied with the Axis group? The music of Verdi and Mascagni, of Gounod and Cesar Franck, indeed of countless other Italian and French creative artists, is one of the strongest possible forces for peace and understanding among peoples.

We know that the little country of Finland came to be almost universally loved largely as a result of the popularity of its most honored son, the composer, Jean Sibelius. In a similar manner, it was the matchless piano music of Chopin which impressed the sorrows of Poland on the heart of the world. Moreover, in recent years Ignaz Jan Paderewski brought this music to such a height of poetic persuasiveness that once again Poland lives in the affections of music lovers everywhere with something of the same impassioned fervor that Chopin put into his imperishable compositions.

A more specific example of the power of music to promote understanding may be found in the reaction of the Swedish people to the music of the Norwegian Grieg. Relations between Sweden and Norway had been much strained over the question of Norwegian national independence, so that when in 1894 Grieg, an ardent nationalist, was asked to conduct two concerts of his own works at Stockholm, he refused indignantly. Two years later he was again invited and this time he accepted. In a letter to a friend he explained his change of attitude. ". . . Soon the whole nation will be asleep. Let us artists at least keep awake. It is unquestionably our mission to keep alive the national feeling and God knows it is needed now. I was before too furiously angry to give my art to the Swedes . . . But now I have changed my tune because I feel it is my duty to undertake in this way a 'promenade' to Stockholm . . ."

Grieg's appearances in the Swedish capital were indeed a "promenade" to Stockholm. The welcome which he received was warm and spontaneous. Among all classes of people the effect of his music was to deepen understanding and sympathy for Norway's cause.

Among the performances of his works there was one in which a Swedish chorus sang *"Ja, vi elsker"* (Yes, We Love the Land that Towers), the Norwegian national anthem. After the concert a banquet was held and various speeches made in honor of the composer. At this time Grieg had an opportunity to express his own feelings: "Nothing will make me believe any more in hatred between peoples, for the people's wish is toward good understanding."

That Grieg's music has contributed to this understanding has been convincingly demonstrated. If today we think of Norway and Sweden almost as one country, it is due at least in part to the healing influence of his strongly nationalistic yet universal art.

Another point of contact at which music has demonstrated its effectiveness in bringing better feeling is that of the relation between Gentile and Jew. Unfortunately, despite the fact that countless Jews and Gentiles have lived together in perfect harmony and with perfect understanding and are still doing so, to the complete refutation of those who say such a thing cannot be done, in wide areas of our contemporary life misunderstanding still exists. Anti-Semitism is the worst throwback to medieval obscurantism in the modern world, and it is because of the critical nature of this particular problem at this particular time that emphasis must be placed on the very real contribution of music to its solution.

The music of Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer, of Rubenstein and Goldmark, and of other Jewish composers of their breadth and vision, has acted as a tremendous force in breaking down old racial and religious antagonisms. No one can say how many Christian hearts have been touched by the appeal of Mendelssohn's "Elijah." This fine oratorio, the most popular ever written with the exception of the "Messiah" by Handel, is a distinctively Jewish contribution to the world. The story is, of course, Jewish, and the music is that of one who, while choosing to identify himself more with the total sweep of European culture than with the traditions of his race, was Jewish both in the fairylike splendor of his lighter works and in the poignant humanity of his grander conceptions.

It is hardly necessary to speak of the conspicuous success of Jewish musicians in the field of interpretive music. One need only think of pianists like Mark Hambourg, Gabrilowitsch, or Myra Hess; violinists like Joachim, Heifetz, Kreisler, or Menuhin; conductors like Koussevitzky, Bruno Walter, or Sir Landon Ronald to remember how great the Jewish contribution has been. But it is not so much that the Jew has been successful as it is that he has so often used his talents for the furtherance of better feeling among all classes and peoples that makes his contribution significant from our point of view. Bruno Walter, for example, is a refugee from Nazi-Germany and Austria, one who has suffered deep personal wrongs at the hands of the Nazi regime. Yet on his programs he gives a prominent place to Wagner and Richard Strauss, although Wagner's anti-Semitic writings undoubtedly played their part in building up the prejudice from which Walter has suffered. It was with a similar spirit in an earlier age that Karl Tausig, the Jewish pianist, befriended Wagner, worked for the acceptance of his music, and helped materially in raising money for the Bayreuth Theatre.

On the other hand, it should be pointed out that when with the rise of Hitler Jewish musicians came under fire in Germany, certain gentile artists sprang to their defense. One of these was the great conductor Arturo Toscanini who, it will be recalled, refused to continue his connection with the Bayreuth Festival because of his dislike of the anti-Semitic policies of the German government. And even in Germany there were many gentile artists who had the courage to express disapproval of the persecution of their Jewish colleagues. Great music elevates the human soul, and those who serve it faithfully seldom have room for baser tribute.

In the field of the better popular music something of the same thing is true. If the lighter forms do not move us as profoundly, they may for that very reason spread more widely in their influence for good. Such songs as "God Bless America," by the Jewish-American composer, Irving Berlin, express the democratic belief in freedom and justice and racial equality—not explicitly, of course, but subtly in a manner capable of bringing the American ideal ever into the thoughts of the people. Two other Jewish-American composers, Jerome Kern and George Gershwin, have contributed to understanding among peoples by their popularization of the Negro in such songs as "Old Man River" and "I Got Plenty of Nothin'." And still another American of Jewish descent, Louis Gruenberg, has made a similar contribution, notably in his powerful music drama, *Emperor Jones*.

But if others have done their share in interpreting the spirit of the Negro, there are Negroes themselves who have done incalculably more. One thinks of William Grant Still, the gifted Afro-American composer, of Paul Robeson, Roland Hayes, Dorothy Maynor, and of many other outstanding artists in the interpretive and creative fields. One thinks, above all, of Marian Anderson. Brilliantly endowed, and educated despite the terrific handicaps imposed on her by reason of her race, Miss Anderson has spoken as only a genius can of the beauty and dignity of her people. It is difficult to understand how anyone in whose heart flows the blood of our common humanity could harbor fear or distrust or hatred of Marian Anderson's race as they hear her sing, let us say, the "Alto Rhapsody" or a soul-stirring spiritual of the type of "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child." The race from which sprang such art has an inestimable contribution to make to all races and all peoples.

Another notable example of the power of music to foster understanding may be found in the growing soliditary among the Americas. Such songs as "Estrillita," "La Golondrina," and "Ay! Ay! Ay!" have long been a factor in the interpretation of the Latin-American spirit to the United States. Our popular music, meanwhile, chiefly through the agency of the films, has had a decided effect in building a greater unity among the peoples of North and South and Central America. But it is only recently that we of the North have come to sense even dimly the extent and variety of Latin-American music. The vast majority of our music-loving population does not even know the names of the outstanding composers of the other Americas. We know, or at least most of us do, the gifted Cuban genius, Ernesto Lecuona, who gave us the incomparably beautiful "Malaguena"; we know something of the music of the Brazilian giant, Villa-Lobos; we may have heard concerts conducted by Brazil's No. 2 composer, Burle Marx, or by the Mexican composer and conductor, Carlos Chavez; but beyond these names and a few others most of us are ignorant of everything except the most obvious examples of Latin-American music.

Fortunately, however, the situation is changing. Interest in the music of our sister republics is increasing. If this is due in a measure to the increased solidarity in the political and economic sphere, this solidarity itself is furthered by the music. As we come to know the music of Argentina and Peru and Colombia and Equador, and that of a dozen other countries to the south, we shall better understand the people who inhabit these countries.

Also, as we look at the musical conditions in these nations we shall be likely to learn much that will be of value in the strengthening of our musical life. In particular we might study the government supported S.O.D.R.E. (*Servicio Oficial de Difusion Radio Electrica*), which gives symphony concerts, opera, and ballet in the lovely, cultured city of Montevideo. As yet this seems to be in advance of anything we have been able to accomplish in state support of a musical organization.

We have looked briefly at a few areas in which music is operating to break down barriers between peoples. Music is obviously not the only art which has this effect, but it is the most immediate in its application and the most universal in its appeal. When the hatred and violence which now stalk our world have passed—as they inevitably must pass—we shall find music still remaining as one of the most inspiring forces in the reconstruction which will come.

# "Union Now": A Reply

ROBERT S. HOAGLAND

The recent exhortation in UNITY by John G. MacKinnon for support of Union Now (a more honest name than Federal Union) is an illustration of the enthusiasm for halfway measures being advocated to prevent future wars. Union Now is not to be condemned because it goes too far, but because it does not go far enough.

No doubt most of those supporting the plan are convinced that it will eliminate wars. But many critics of Streit's brain-child are convinced that it is also supported by many disingenuous politicos who wish to maintain the imperialist racket which has dragged the human race to its present crucifixion.

This ignoble suspicion may be groundless. But it is amazing how widespread in the collective human mind is the reluctance to press through problems to fundamental solutions. This inertia before fundamental analyses is a very prevalent mental ailment and entitles a skeptical mind to ungenerous suspicions about Union Now.

We need, today, to analyze the support of Union Now. We need to analyze the whole plan to discover whether its supporters actually desire peace. We do need fundamental guideposts to world peace. But many of us feel that Union Now is either a stopgap or a decoy so far as genuine peace plans are concerned. Even if I give consent to the current dogma that England and the United States are fighting this war in the cause of humanity, I am obliged to asseverate for fundamental ethical and humanitarian reasons that Union Now rejects that cause. The cause of humanity will be forgotten under this plan, a plan that is a sweet-toned prelude of, if not an invitation to, a future war—and a world war, of course.

One wonders why, of all the plans for future sanity in the world, only Union Now is pushed with adequate vigor and sufficient resources. Why do we have, against opposing humanitarian peace plans, the cynicism that Carl Sandburg records?

> "Man will never make the United States of Europe nor later the United States of the World,
> No, you are going too far when you talk about one world flag for the great Family of Nations," they say that now.

Why has not some pressure organization or some wealthy New York banker or some Anglophile public figure spoken out for Alfred Bingham's very sane book, *The United States of Europe?* Or why has there not been more attention for such a genuinely profound analysis as Hans Heymann's *Plan for Permanent Peace?* Why have "liberals" so painstakingly avoided public consideration of the suggestions of the prophet of Pan-Europe, Count R. N. Coudenhove-Kalergi? Will there be sufficient thought about Louis Adamic's probably quixotic *Two Way Passage?*

The heat generated when these various proposals are brought up in Union Now circles is probably indicative of the basic propaganda nature of Union Now. Raymond Clapper's comment that the Administration shows little interest in anything more than a "lick Hitler" goal is significant in that so many administration supporters are perfervid advocates of Union Now. Streit's plan fits into a "lick Hitler" campaign and into but little else. Union Now offers itself as a gesture of hope for a world in anguish. Instead, it is just a lick the devil gesture, a fist-waving at the German and other apparently "undemocratic" peoples. As is true of point eight of the Atlantic Charter, Union Now would lead inevitably to a campaign to "hold the Germans down," and would thus create an even worse ogre than Hitler. Vice-President Wallace, in the *Atlantic* for January, speaks of plans for peace. Does he think they can be forwarded under point eight of the Charter? It is to be doubted if even the most democratic of the German exiles would agree. Read "What About Germany's Future?" in the *Free World* of November. If the eight points are the actual program agreed upon by Churchill and Roosevelt, few but British and American imperialists can honestly think they will bring the world a stable peace. Informed men cannot be such poor psychologists, let alone such poor students of history. And few but British and American imperialists can think that Union Now, an enlarged point eight, can build for the world an enduring and just peace.

Without elaborate supporting documentation (which can be secured from English periodicals), I state the conviction of an increasing number of observers: Union Now is but a stopgap imperialist gesture, well decorated with oratory and ornamented *ad nauseam* with pseudo-ideals to make a war-weary people think it bears a message of peace. In reality, it is a new imperialist line-up, leading inevitably, so soon as the nations denoted non-democratic can be organized under a new-edition-Hitler, to a world conflict which will put the finishing touches to such few worthwhile items of civilization as survive this present crusade to save the world for Christendom and Democracy.

The key to this truth is in several surprisingly obvious facts.

The first is this: that England, as a nationalistic power, has in the past and the present opposed all gestures toward a unification of Europe. A United States of Europe has been the horrendous nightmare of run-of-the-mill British statesmen. Any Britisher supporting for the future a plan of a United States of Europe as against Union Now is a voice crying in the wilderness. The reason is simple. It is the old imperialist realization of Britain that a unification of Europe means the end of England's political and financial power. Britain's tactic against a possible unification of the continental states was the balance of power. England's rule of the nations across the channel was based on the weakness of those nations. Her early industrial and trade monopoly could not be broken. But at last the World War did break it; and the United States of America became the world's insurgent creditor nation. Churchill is a realist; and if England's safety lies in being follower instead of leader he is for that condition on the best terms he can get.

The other very obvious fact is wrapped up in the tory personality of Winston Churchill. It is hard to imagine that shrewd strategist learning new ways of thought in his old age, after a life of the most vigorous imperialist effort. Churchill was honest enough in 1936 to say in his call for a "reign of law in Europe" that "in all this there stands first and foremost the interest and safety of Great Britain and the British Empire."

With an eye on this interest, Churchill in 1930 looked with favor upon a United States of Europe.

Hitler was by no means anywhere near smashing the anemic Weimar Republic. The Britisher probably felt that Germany was just strong enough to make permanent the balance of power inside any United States of Europe. England's safety would be secure. Bingham reminds us that Churchill's natural trend of thought today would be to recreate the world as it was before Hitler. In 1930 he thought that British support of a United States of Europe would provide a balance of power which would keep the world as it had been.

But after Hitler had been rampaging upon the scene for three years Churchill found his thought for the safety of England taking a different course. In 1936 he must have dumfounded his fellow imperialists and Tories by insisting, in an article on naval policy, that Britain must not push for naval parity with the United States of America. He urged that a big U. S. Navy, even exceeding that of Britain, was exactly what Britain needed to feel secure. We may reason that he had seen that Europe might be united. Peril was at hand for Britain. If England had a navy equal to the U. S. Navy, would she not have to stand alone? Might there not be hostile jealousies that would thrust the two English-speaking nations apart? If the United States of America had a larger navy than Britannia, would not the Anglo-American bloc of 1917 continue to be the world's dominating force?

Union Now is the continuation of this 1917 policy. And the policy is dressed up for some intellectual palates by the racial tone: *Anglo-Saxon* unity. All told, it is a pretty shrewdly conceived instrument of power politics. It would do justice to a Gladstone, a Bismarck, or even a Machiavelli. (Review the story of the *New Commonwealth,* described by Bingham as "an organization sponsored by British Tories . . . founded by Lord Davies, with Winston Churchill as president of the British section." It was a shrewd political gesture which deceived many innocent humanitarian souls. Union Now is its more subtle successor.)

Union Now with Britain is a blueprint for the third World War: "Democratic" Imperialist Powers vs. "Autocratic" Imperialist Powers.

Surely humanitarians can think through to something better than that!

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# Just Being Human

E. BURDETTE BACKUS

There is a passage in the story of the good Bishop in Victor Hugo's novel, *Les Miserables,* which describes the Christlike charity of judgment with which the Bishop ministered to the needs of even the condemned criminals. It concludes with this explanation: "He examined the road over which the fault had passed." That is, he saw how circumstances had contributed to the delinquency of these unfortunate individuals and seasoned his justice with more than a little mercy. This attitude on his part was central to his ability to help raise those who had fallen; it was a creative power within him that, communicated to their lives, moved them toward their regeneration which is supremely exemplified in the character of Jean Valjean.

Is it not, perchance, true that we need to bring the same attitude to bear on our own faults? We are what we are, in our evil as well as our good, by virtue of the whole process that has brought us to this day. There have been many factors in that process which were entirely outside our control. It is only in small part that we have created our own good, only in small measure that we are responsible for our own evil. The acceptance of that fact, without undue pride or undue blame, is the point from which to begin. It does not mean that we shall cease to struggle, give over the effort at improvement; it does mean that the creative process of making something better out of ourselves must be based on that acceptance of ourselves which corresponds to the famous words of Jesus, "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more."

There is no little comfort for us in those lines of Shakespeare, found in *Measure for Measure:*

> They say, best men are moulded out of faults,
> And, for the most, become much more the better
> For being a little bad.

It is inevitable that we should have our faults; none of us can escape being a little bad,—perhaps more than a little. But that is not the end of the matter, for, equally, it is "just being human" to refuse to accept these faults and weaknesses as final, and to try to make them serve higher ends. Because if we know our own weaknesses we can look with greater sympathy upon our brother when he succumbs to temptation, and instead of kicking him when he is down, help him to recover. Because we have had first-hand experience of the unhappy consequences of evil we appreciate more fully the stern necessity of transforming it into good, of becoming better because we have been a little bad.

The most essential condition for achieving the kind of life toward which we yearn in our best moments is that we shall keep warm in our hearts the recognition that we are all just human beings living together. There are differences between us, to be sure. Some are much more highly gifted by nature than others; some have been severely handicapped by the road they have been compelled to travel. But these differences fade into relative insignificance when viewed against our common humanity. Rich and poor, educated and ignorant, intelligent and stupid, saint and sinner,—we are all just human beings living together. No one, not even the strongest, is self-sufficient; and even the least of these, our brethren, has some contribution to make to the common life. The greatest fact of all is our mutual dependence, our need of each other; hence the premium on forbearance, good will, mutual helpfulness.

It is a difficult thing—this business of just being human—fraught with many a pitfall; wherefore, it behooves us to be charitable with one another, understanding of faults and failures. It is a high and noble mystery, this business of just being human; wherefore it behooves us to place strict requirements on ourselves in our efforts to live up to its possibilities, and so to govern our relations with others that we elicit from them their best. We shall fail, not once but many times in our effort to practice this difficult art, but we shall return again and again. Both the failure and the renewed endeavor are alike parts of just being human.

# The Spiritual Nihilism of Reinhold Niebuhr

ALFRED STIERNOTTE

The theology of Reinhold Niebuhr, called Christian realism by some, and the new supernaturalism or neo-Calvinism by others, bids fair to redirect the course of American theology for the next few decades. It cannot be denied that this school of thought has received a tremendous impetus in the last few years. If our much-abused liberalism is to have a new and fruitful lease of life, it must face fearlessly and critically the issues presented by Niebuhr. Two preliminary notes are, however, in order.

In the first place, it is idle to say that we should not give so much attention to Niebuhr. Niebuhr is being heard and will be heard, and the worst of it is that he will be heard in our own Unitarian movement. The only way to preserve and deepen our liberalism is to meet this new Calvinism and grapple with it in the same confident and victorious spirit that the Unitarians of the nineteenth century manifested in grappling with and overcoming the Calvinism of their day.

In the second place, insofar as Niebuhr's thought expresses a realistic approach to social and international problems, there is much to commend in it, especially to those facile Christian moralists and pacifists who come under his vitriolic pen. While his expression is at times very arrogant and superior, fundamentally Niebuhr is right in pointing out the romantic idealism of most pacifists and reformers in failing to appreciate the existence of intractable factors in national and international life—such as Fascist aggression—which no amount of good will can ever overcome. The ultimate necessity of using force against powers which understand only the language of force has been Niebuhr's main emphasis from the time of his writings in *The World Tomorrow* and *The Christian Century* in 1931 right down to his recent articles in *The Nation*. His famous book, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, was a much deserved bit of realism for romantic idealists, and in the light of the present situation in which we find ourselves, who will say Niebuhr has not been right? Yet, strange to say, his next book, *Reflections on the End of an Era*, superimposed a traditional theology on these very penetrating social insights. All his subsequent books have merely brought forth redefinitions and fresh amplifications of his theology with its typical cult of the paradoxical, the contradictory, and the absurd. It is this theological imposition, and not necessarily his profound insight into social affairs, which is objected to in this paper.

Niebuhr's supporters, however, are in the habit of assuming that objectors have not taken the trouble to read him, and so are not in a position to offer valid criticism. In order to refute this accusation, it will be necessary to quote rather extensively from Niebuhr. A careful reading of most of his works reduces his complex, many-sided, and abstruse theology to two very simple ideas: sin and salvation. First, his idea of sin is made clear from his conception of human nature:

> The spiritual structure of human character is, in short, of such a nature that it is preposterous to hope that an individual will can ever be inserted with frictionless harmony into a general community will or that a national will can, under any conceivable circumstances, be brought completely under the dominion of a world society. These hopes are preposterous for the simple reason that the very capacities in human life which make for progress and for social integration upon higher and higher levels also make it certain that an individual or a collective ego will and must, on occasion, defy the community. Caesars and saints are made possible by the same structure of human character.[1]

It may be true that the proponents of the facile formula "the progress of humanity onward and upward forever" were too romantic, yet they did not assert "the progress of humanity onward and upward forever under any conceivable circumstances." They did not even envisage any stage at which humanity would become a static and "frictionless harmony"—progressive development was the essence of their thought. But Niebuhr is, of course, quite sure that "under any conceivable circumstances" a national will cannot "be brought completely under the dominion of a world society." Now the idealists who propose world government may be incurable romantics, but even their most profound representatives would deny that they have in mind the domination of a national will under the sovereign authority of a world society. It is not too romantic to believe that the national will may become more and more an active participator in the processes of a world society. This is entirely different from the "sovereign authority" involved in the concept of "dominion."

If natural man falls under this condemnation of being unable to achieve a world society, it must not be assumed that the saint fares any better in the hands of Niebuhr. His sense of human frailty, of sin, is so intense that he takes it upon himself to castigate the saints: "Saints are still sinners, not merely because they fall short of the ultimate norm in their finiteness; but because they are bound to reveal some sinful blindness to their very finiteness, some sinful pretension exceeding their virtues in their very achievements."[2]

Who will say that Niebuhr is not arrogant and pretentious in finding sinful pretensions in the saints? Poor Francis of Assisi! How the great Niebuhr would hound thee wert thou living now! This sinful quality which the saint is "bound to reveal" is it not conditioned by the fact that Niebuhr's theology is "bound to reveal" these pessimistic and morbid exaggerations in its debunking mania?

In this sad state of affairs, one is inclined to ask: "So what?" And this brings us to the second main idea in Niebuhr, his concept of salvation. After he has made the worst of human "illusions," romanticisms, and frailties, he has this to say:

> Human existence denies its own deepest and most essential nature. That is tragic. But when that fact is understood, when men cease to make the standards of a sinful existence the norms of life but accept its true norm, even though they fail to obey it, their very contrition opens the eyes of faith. This is the Godly sorrow that worketh repentance. Out of this despair hope is born. The hope is simply this: that the contradictions of human existence, which men cannot surmount, are swallowed up in the life of God Himself. The God of Christian Faith is not only creator but redeemer. He does not allow human existence to end tragically. He snatches victory from defeat. He is Himself defeated in history but He is also victorious in that defeat.[3]

This neo-Calvinistic idea of salvation is repeated time and time again in Niebuhr's writings. For instance:

> Christianity is a faith which takes us through tragedy to beyond tragedy by way of the Cross to the victory in the Cross. The God whom we worship takes the contradictions of human existence into Himself. This knowledge is a stumbling block to the Jews, and to the Gentiles foolishness,

1. *Christianity and Power Politics*, New York: Scribners', p. 157.
2. *Beyond Tragedy*, Scribners', 1937, p. 264.
3. *Beyond Tragedy*, p. 19.

but to them that are called it is the power and the wisdom of God.[4]

Again,

> The idea of grace can be stated adequately only in mythical terms. In the mythos of Jesus the holy God reveals his holiness in terms of mercy and this mercy redeems the sinner. This redemption means that the sinner knows himself to be in the embrace of divine love in spite of his sin. The holiness of God thus creates both the consciousness of sin and the consolation which makes the consciousness of sin bearable.[5]

Frankly, if to be called of God is to accept this substitutionary action on God's part, then we are not called of God! If one had a Voltairian spirit, one might inquire into the wisdom of a creation so full of human contradictions, so much so in fact that God must take the trouble to take these up into himself at a subsequent time! This doctrine of salvation is very objectionable on at least three counts:

1. It is *defeatist.* Man, apparently, cannot surmount the contradictions of his existence. No matter how hard he strives, and even though he be given the whole sweep of history, he will still be a miserable sinner at the end! He will still be enmeshed in the contradictions between the impulses of nature and spirit, a frail creature fearful of following his ideals, lest he be guilty of romantic idealism and "self-absolutization" (sic), and equally fearful of following his impulses! If this is the moral injunction of the new theology, why does it not ask the human race to commit universal suicide!

2. It is *unethical.* A theological conception which stresses the nature of existence as being contrived in such a way as to condemn human nature to unresolvable contradictions during the whole course of history seems to have certain prototypes in dictatorial theories of government. Is there not a danger that such a theological conception would be used by unscrupulous dictators in order to sanction the contradictions of their regime as divinely ordained?

Human nature, of course, remains defeated! It is God who is victorious, "he is also victorious in that defeat!" We do not see how the process of God "snatching victory from defeat" at the end of history, can have any historic significance for poor, struggling humanity. The significance of the Unitarian movement is that it asserted the worth and dignity of human life. If there is a single current of thought which runs through it all, it is the firm conviction that the dignity of man shall never take second place to the assumed virtues of any theological view. There are certainly many theological views much closer to the Unitarian outlook than this neo-Calvinism which implies a complete rejection of Unitarianism. For instance, the mystical idealism of Rufus M. Jones, the naturalistic theism of H. N. Wieman, Shailer Mathews, and William Clayton Bower, are much closer to our own outlook. But how many Unitarian students are aware of this? To find new and neglected truths in this Pauline-Augustinian tradition, which prays so much on Niebuhr's mind, is certainly a negation of Unitarianism's great historical genius. It is a moot point among Christian scholars as to whether the Pauline-Augustinian tradition is an essential part of Christianity. *A fortiori* then, this tradition is still less an essential part of Unitarianism!

3. It is *escapist.* The conception of human contradictions which are taken up by God into himself is bound to lead to irresponsibility on the part of man in an attempt to shelve responsibility onto God. The typical Niebuhrian theses are simply these: human life is inextricably involved in sinful contradictions; these contradictions are taken up by God, since man cannot surmount them. This is really all there is to Niebuhr! If this is not a theological "passing of the buck," we do not know how it can be described more aptly! Is it not the typical Calvinist escape from man's mundane existence to a supernatural satisfaction in a theological neutralization of man's sins? Of course, Niebuhr would deny this escapist tendency, in affirming that, though he is moving theologically to the right, he is moving politically to the left. In that case, shall we expect a people's commissar for the Unconditioned Transcendent?

Between Niebuhr's conception of man and the Unitarian affirmation of the dignity of man, there is thus clear-cut opposition. It is for us to be deeply cognizant of the fact that we too have a tradition of which we may be justly proud, and which need not be overshadowed by this new Calvinism. The teaching of history is that Channing initiated the religious development of Unitarianism which affirmed the dignity of man in contradiction to the sinfulness of man so long expatiated upon by Calvinistic theology. *For us Unitarians that is the meaning of history.* Niebuhr has every right to base his theology on a renovated and subtle Pauline-Augustinian-Calvinistic tradition. But we in turn have every right to insist that the Channing-Emerson-Parker tradition is *our* tradition. "Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself and you shall have the suffrage of the universe."

4. *Christianity and Power Politics,* p. 214.
5. *Reflection on the End of an Era,* Scribners', 1934, p. 290.

# Formula for Lent

WALLACE W. ROBBINS

Maybe it is a good thing, I am not sure, but it is certain that as the Biblical psalmists found their analogies in the sheep and night stars of a pastoral people, modern clinics are beginning to find literary and pedagogical uses in the machine. After some weeks had passed from the time of Heywood Broun's conversion to Rome, his confessor, Monsignor Sheen, called him on the telephone and told him that since he must have gone a thousand miles since they had met last, he had better come in for an oil-change.

With that as a model I thought of announcing: Get Your Spiritual Tires Retreaded During Lent. Somehow I could not summon the daring to do it, but just between us, it does convey something, does it not? At least it suggests that Lent is not a matter of pomp and that it is as modern and useful as it is ancient and long-practiced. More than that it clearly points out that it is something we need.

Say what we will in open defense of ourselves, I think we must confess inwardly that our lives tend to follow the laws of explosion rather than the laws of construction. The busy days in which we live tend to pull all our energies outward and to expend them with such rapidity that, if we do not approach exhaustion of our powers, we, at least, begin to operate formally in a stereotyped fashion without that inward power of zest and creativity which manhood demands. Life can become, under these circumstances, a merely outward and

symbolic thing, rather than a deep and real one.

An intelligent and sincere keeping of Lent is a matter of plunging through the superficialities of our lives and finding the center and core of meaning to that personality which we so glibly call ourselves.

Customarily Lent has been a time of self-imposed restraint. This is psychologically sound. Giving up those forms of meaningless activities that we regularly employ only to keep us on edge so we can get at the next useful job, we will find an extra amount of energy and time available for the exploration of some unknown margins of ourselves.

The next time you have a minute, do not reach for the cigarettes or a picture magazine, but relax and invite the spirit. You may find yourself reviewing your past, perhaps your childhood. Good, see what turns up; often the past has wise things to tell you about your present. Maybe you find some unpleasant happening of the day forcing its unwelcome attention upon you, good, try to get yourself free of blame or blaming, and understand how it came about; it may be, for all its strange garb, an angel. Whatever comes to mind, welcome it and ponder its meaning, for thus are old doors unlocked and new ones opened.

Above all, this Lent we must understand that when we seek self-knowledge we shall find it leads to other self-knowledge: to our fellow Earthmen. The wise man knows that by saving others a man already has saved himself.

Therefore when you break through the surface and plunge deep within, you will find that you are not alone but that everything you find is to be explained in terms of relationship. Only religion can make such an explanation. You are met with men and the Great Spirit of Life: walk reverently but unafraid and God goes with you.

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# Brotherhood Now!*

KARL M. CHWOROWSKY

We enter upon this year's observance of Brotherhood Week and Sunday with a profound sense of humility, penitence, and resolve. We cannot but recognize in the reverses now being suffered by the armed forces of the democratic nations and their allies a severe rebuke of and a stinging judgment upon that unpardonable pride and arrogant sense of superiority that have so long characterized and still inform the attitude of our people toward the colored races of the world.

The fall of Singapore and the accompanying tragic events of these days should come as a terrible shock of awakening to those who until now have so blindly and complacently assumed that, even if given the same facilities for industrial production and the same training in the use of the instruments of war and destruction, the so-called "inferior races" could not possibly match political and economic resourcefulness and military prowess and ability with those of the "superior white man." Surely, no further proof is needed to convince the supercilious white man that any colored man, inspired with the same love of country and equipped with the same type of murderous and effective instruments of war, can fight as stubbornly and as well as any other human being. We can only hope that this disturbing shock to our sense of pride and superiority may at this time lead us to a serious examination of our hearts and consciences that perchance we may learn from this painful lesson and humiliating experience the simple truth that there is no such thing as a "superior race" in any sense in which these terms have been so often and so loosely used by the white people. And surely it is time that we realized that any victory we win will gain little in glory and significance if we have to admit that we won against armies poorly equipped, badly led, and generally made up of blind fanatics and misguided cowards. Whatever genuine glory our own soldiers may achieve in their victory over the foe will become the proper subject of immortal story and song only as we realize that our deeds of valor and acts of bravery deserved victory and the laurel wreath of unperishable fame because we met and conquered a brave and efficient foe, an adversary worthy of our finest mettle, irrespective of his color or race.

We are painfully aware as we celebrate Brotherhood Week and Sunday that our vociferous protestations of democracy and equality must remain so much cant and hypocrisy as long as in industry, in defense production, in labor unions, in our school systems, in our armed forces, and even among our blood donors we discriminate against the Negro. The history of the past more than seventy-five years has shown conclusively that our Negro fellow-citizens have demonstrated in every way that they have earned for themselves every right and privilege, economically, politically, and socially, that their white fellow-citizens enjoy; to make any discrimination at this or at any other time against them must be condemned as blasphemy against the sacred cause of Freedom and Human Rights.

We recognize with deep regret that despite all conferences and public demonstrations of good will and tolerance anti-Semitism in our land is growing both in extent and in intensity, and that little is being done by the churches and the organized forces of Americanism and democracy to wage an effective counter-offensive against this vicious, un-American, and irreligious movement.

We therefore call upon the conscience of the churches of America to rouse itself now, and we appeal to all men and women of intelligence, character, and good will to make a mighty resolve to act now with a degree of directness and consecration unmatched in the annals of Christian history. We appeal to our fellow-Christians throughout this land in the name of American Unity, in the name of democracy, and in the name of that Brotherhood to which we have dedicated not only these days but our lives, as Christians and Americans to act, and to act now.

We challenge the men and women of the churches to take an unmistakable stand against any form of discrimination against our Negro fellow-citizen by showing in deed and action, as true Americans and as practicing

*Resolution adopted unanimously by the Flatbush (Fourth) Unitarian Church of Brooklyn, N. Y., Sunday, February 15, 1942.

Christians, that they believe in the complete economic, political, and social equality of our colored brethren and that they stand ready to implement this faith with such courageous acts of fellowship and coöperation as are necessary to break down those artificial barriers that a blind prejudice has erected between black and white.

We challenge the membership of the churches to show by a growing emphasis upon the common heritage of our Judaeo-Christian tradition, shared by Jew and Christian alike, that closer and more effective association in every common enterprise of our American life is possible between Jew and Christian and that such fellowship in common tasks and in united action cannot but help to destroy the very roots of anti-Semitism.

Anti-Semitism and kindred racial and religious prejudices have always battened on the fears and superstitions that arise from ignorance and from the suspicions that ignorance of a people and its culture breeds. Let the churches insist that their church schools, their young peoples' groups, their organizations of men and women read and study anew and with open eyes those documents that reveal the real nature of Judaism and disclose the priceless contributions made by Jewish genius to our civilization. On such foundations of scientific knowledge, better understanding, and cordial feeling, democracy in America shall not find it difficult to build the majestic temple of Brotherhood, Freedom, and Justice.

We challenge Christian America to action now, to immediate, courageous, intelligent, and consecrated action! The day for resolutions is past, the day for high resolve is here. The day for academic discusssion was yesterday, the day for action is now and today!

# The Study Table

### A Living Monument

KNIGHT IN WHITE ARMOR. *(In Memoriam: Ralph Cheyney.) Edited by Lilith Lorraine. Avalon Poetry Shrine, Route 8, Box 83-F, San Antonio, Texas. $1.00.*

Here is a living monument, so very unique both in spirit and performance as to be something of a miracle. No more striking monolith could be erected to the memory of a valiant crusader than this volume of poignant tributes in poetry and prose to the beloved Ralph Cheyney. These spontaneous manifestations of esteem and spiritual commiseration form a testament of pulsating beauty which proves—if any such proof were necessary—that his dynamic poet-soul has already seared his epitaph in flaming song across the very heart of humanity.

Within the handsome format of this remarkable volume literally scores of the most prominent figures from almost every profession, and of various races and creeds, many of whom are internationally famous, have written with profound emotion and luminous admiration of one of the greatest apostles of brotherhood and oneness in any era or of any land. As poet, essayist, editor, anthologist, lecturer, educator, and man, the many-faceted genius of Ralph Cheyney exerted an incalculable influence on thousands of those fortunates who were privileged to come into contact with his vital personality. Following lyrics of infinite pathos by his young son, Trent Cheyney (aged twelve), and his illustrious widow, Lucia Trent, there are glowing poems by such noted writers as Clement Wood, Louis Ginsberg, Stanton A. Coblentz, Etta Josephean Murfey, Lilith Lorraine, Fania Kruger, Henry George Weiss, and eulogies in prose from John Haynes Holmes, Lawrence Wilson Neff, E. Merrill Root, Ida Elaine James, Jack Greenberg, Margarette Ball Dickson, and countless equally celebrated contemporaries.

The volume is artistically printed through the generosity of Lee Carleton, the publisher, and the entire proceeds from its sale will accrue to the extremely gifted Lucia Trent, who will thus be enabled to keep aglow the lyrical torch, handed down by her distinguished husband. Everyone who has the slightest regard for the ultimates of poetic beauty, truth, and universal brotherhood, will hasten to order a copy of this superb anthology without delay. Thus they will aid in accelerating the dawn of that millennium of unity and spiritual cooperation of all peoples throughout the world, in the cause of which Ralph Cheyney, intrepid knight, donned the immaculate white armor of faith and invincible courage.

GORDON LECLAIRE.

### Race

SCIENTIFIC ASPECTS OF THE RACE PROBLEM. *By Specialists. Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press.* 302 *pp.* $3.00.

In a day when so much bigotry, nonsense, and superstition is being talked about "race," it is a good thing to have some facts.

The following eminent scientists accepted the invitation to write chapters for this book: H. S. Jennings, Charles A. Berger, Dom Thomas V. Moore, Ales Hrdlicka, Robert H. Lowie, and Otto Klineberg.

In publishing their essays the Catholic University has rendered a real service, both to scholarship and to religion.

I have been amazed several times in recent months to hear educated, kindly, generous Christians talk about colored races in the most unchristian fashion. They, of course, think their judgments are based on facts. How can "they" be reached?

"They" includes ministers and high school teachers as well as the mine-run of lay men and lay women. Here are the facts by recognized experts. Will "they" ever read them?

The preface is by Bishop Joseph Corrigan, Rector of the Catholic University of America. The University undertook this study knowing it was needed because in this field there have been too few objective scientific facts; and because in many parts of the world social plans, education, and international agreements are decided on the basis of race.

"With too many Americans—race prejudice" is an article of faith. With that faith they excuse the breaking of the moral principles which all civilized people have accepted for a thousand years.

As Bishop Corrigan says, we may not convert the most fanatical but perhaps something can be done to prevent the spread of the contagion. (Fanatical prejudice tends to become a mental disease.)

Doctor Lowie points out that even some scientists have tried hard to cling to the old superstitions, which they picked up as children, but they are having constantly to give ground in face of the facts.

The last sentence in the book by Doctor Klineberg sums up all that is known when he says that innate racial or ethnic differences have not been demonstrated. That is, that after all the intelligence tests and personality tests, we have no scrap of scientific evidence that any race is inferior—or superior.

I have no space to digest these scholarly chapters. I can only suggest that those who want a better world read the book.

JAMES M. YARD.

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### The Novelist of the Contemporary

HENRY JAMES. *By Lyon N. Richardson. New York: American Book Company.* 490 *pp.*

This book is the latest to appear in that admirable series, The American Writers, issued under the editorship of Harry Hayden Clark. This series ought to be required reading for every American, especially in these days when America again feels a prophetic summons to make the world safe for democracy.

With this thought in mind, Henry James ought to be better known. Born in 1843 the son of a Presbyterian theologian, James like his brother, William, was a pupil of the world, spending his boyhood equally in Europe and America. With this exceptional beginning, Henry James was prepared to do what must constantly be attempted, viz., to interpret the old world to the new. But how well did James understand America? Richardson points out that "the western boundary of his America was the Hudson." It may be answered that James was not primarily interested in regional literature. He was interested in something far greater: the motivation of character and culture. Living the greater part of his life in Europe and becoming a citizen of England as a result of the first World War, James, nevertheless, left instructions that his ashes be interred in New—not old—England. Perhaps, in the future, critics will look back on James as the first of the social novelists who tried to bring about a necessary understanding among modern peoples. Certainly they must rate him higher than Hamlin Garland or Howells even if they limit their criticism to his understanding of American culture. They may turn to *The Ambassadors* to learn the workings of his mind, for this book, a "sublimated autobiography," tells how an American broadens his understanding by living in Europe. That is precisely the story of Henry James. But let it be remembered that James always abhorred the idea that English and American culture were foreign to each other. It was his ideal to write such perfect prose that no one could tell whether he was English or American.

This admirable book is probably the best introduction in English to James. The bibliography is very complete and up-to-the-minute. The selections comprise seven critical essays and seven selections from his fiction.

C. A. HAWLEY.

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# Correspondence

### We Can Build a Good Society

To UNITY:

The Reverend John Haynes Holmes, in UNITY, recognizes that religion is not succeeding "at its job" and that "great masses of men and women still give themselves utterly to materialistic living," despite two thousand years of effort to spread the Christian gospel. And he asks: "What are we to do; where lies the remedy?"

May a lay student of history, psychology, and human behavior venture to answer these two poignant questions?

The Christian religion has failed and will continue to fail at its job because it is unrealistic, unsound, utopian, and, intrinsically, hopelesly impracticable. It demands of human beings the kind of conduct of which only angels—imagined by poets and theologians—are capable. Science and common sense know what to expect of brick, wood, glass, steel, and other materials. In building, the nature of the materials used cannot be neglected or disregarded. Human beings may *profess* certain beliefs under compulsion or out of fear and timidity, but they will not practice what they profess if the alleged beliefs are unreasonable, suicidal, or absurd.

Ask people to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly, and they may—indeed, will in due time—sincerely try to practice these virtues. Ask them to love their neighbors as themselves, to resist no aggression or evil, to turn the other cheek when smitten on one, to embrace their cruel and ruthless enemies, and they will violate each and all of these injunctions.

We do not and cannot love everybody. We certainly do not and cannot love our vicious enemies. We see no reason for enduring injury and insult and grievous injustice without resistance and retaliation. At a certain point, we will fight. It is idle to exhort us not to, and ten thousand years more of so-called Christian preaching will not prove any more fruitful than the two thousand years have.

Let religion study human nature and set before it ideals that are attainable, realizable, workable. The ancient notion that unattainable goals are admirable and valuable is wholly erroneous. An ideal, as William James said, must have "cash value." That is, it must be attainable. If it is not, we lose all interest in it and our daily conduct contradicts and mocks it. Sunday sermons evaporate before Monday morning, and we do what we consider proper and sensible.

Freud has observed that man is nobler than he thinks he is, and also more immoral than he thinks he is. Religion might shed its sentimental and vain demands, and develop a rational and feasible moral code. Then, and then only, will it succeed at its job. Men and women *can* be induced to act justly and mercifully, on the whole, and we must be content with that. Humanism *is* content. Humanism is bound to spread. Christian morality is impossible in any civilized society. We *have* to take thought of the morrow. We *have* to save and insure ourselves. We *have* to invest property, conserve it, carry on business. In all this there is nothing wrong. Christian ethics cannot make it wrong. The remedy, then, is to modernize and reform Christian ethics. We can build a good society on a rational and enlightened basis, get rid of plutocratic abuses, establish economic democracy, curb greed and rapacity, without overstraining and overtaxing human nature.

VICTOR S. YARROS.

*La Jolla, California.*

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### Biological Man vs. Sociological Man

To UNITY:

Today the world is in an unroar; the biological man, the man with the morality and instinct of the cave man, is seeking to rule the sociological man, who desires a life of beauty, of freedom from fear and poverty. Where shall we would-be pacifists place our lives and sacred honor? May not truth be compelled to stoop to conquer, to descend to the level of the cave man, to eradicate him from the historical development, so that freedom may live again?

E. H. BARRETT.

*Lansing, Michigan.*